

stockpiled litter. Although nutrients are somewhat stabilized in these materials, leaching of mobile nutrients can occur during rains. Therefore, sample unprotected compost periodically to monitor changes.

Submitting the sample

Submit samples, the appropriate fee and a completed *Waste Sample Information* sheet (form AD9). Information sheets are available online [select **Information Sheets** from the Agronomic Division home page]. You can also pick them up at any Cooperative Extension office or from the Agronomic Division office.

Use permanent ink to fill out the form. For the most reliable estimate of nutrient availability, provide all the information requested, and select the correct waste identification code and application method from the choices listed. If the codes do not seem to apply to your material, then add a statement describing the waste in the **SAMPLE DESCRIPTION / COMMENTS** section.

Always put samples in the owner's name to facilitate information retrieval. It is best to ship samples via a private carrier to the division's physical address. Personal delivery is also acceptable. Do not ship waste samples via U.S. Mail. Do not put fees or information sheets inside plastic bags containing waste material.

Obtaining the report

Waste samples are usually processed in two to three days. N.C. residents can access their reports online [select **Find Your Report** from the Agronomic Division home page] and/or wait to receive reports through the mail. Reports for

out-of-state samples are not currently available online but can be sent out via e-mail upon request. Mailed reports come with an explanatory cover sheet. These cover sheets are also available online [select **Publications** from the Agronomic Division home page].

NCDA&CS regional agronomists are available throughout the state to provide advice on sampling, interpreting report results and implementing recommendations. Names, county assignments and contact information are available online at www.ncagr.com/agronomi/rahome.htm.

North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Steve Troxler, Commissioner of Agriculture

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Sampling for Waste Analysis



The Agronomic Division analyzes agricultural, municipal and industrial wastes for plant nutrient concentrations and chemical properties pertinent to their agronomic use. Waste is often land-applied to provide nutrients for forage, field or forest crops. At agronomic rates, these applications are both agriculturally beneficial and environmentally safe. Nutrients taken up by plants or retained in the soil should not pose a threat to water resources.

Environmental impact is most likely to occur when wastes are applied 1) at excessive rates, 2) at times when crop demand is low or 3) on slopes vulnerable to excess surface movement of water. Owners of waste products have the responsibility to use them in environmentally safe ways. Nutrient analysis provides the best basis for responsible use. Information on nutrient management regulations is available from the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Waste analysis provides data on lime and fertilizer value, pH and potential hazards. This information enables farmers to 1) save money by reducing use of commercial fertilizer and liming materials, 2) use agronomic application rates that minimize movement of nutrients into surface and ground water and 3) prevent buildup of toxic levels of heavy metals in the soil.